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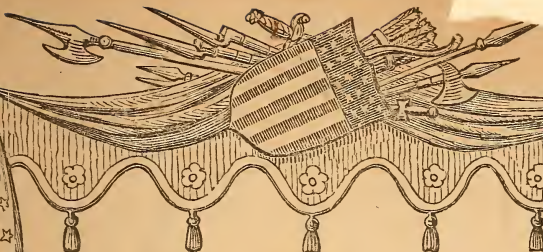


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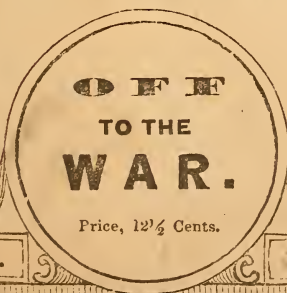
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- 101 The Turned Head.
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- 114 Warlock of the Glen
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- 116 Ladies' Battle,
- 117 Art of Acting,
- 118 Beatrice,
- 119 The Lady of the Lions,
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# OFF TO THE WAR!

AN

ORIGINAL FARCE FOR THE TIMES.

In One Act.

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BY

BENJAMIN EDWARD WOOLF,

AUTHOR OF "CAUGHT AT LAST;" "VALET AND MAID;" "WANTED, A HUSBAND;"  
"THAT NOSE;" "GREAT EXPECTATIONS;" "EUDORA;" &c.



BOSTON:

WILLIAM V. SPENCER,

94, WASHINGTON STREET.

1861.

2



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## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

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DANIEL DODDLEWOBBLE . . . . . Mr. WARREN.  
 WALTER THORNLEY . . . . . : Mr. WHITING.  
 FUDGIT . . . . . Mr. KETCHUM.  
 BLIMBER . . . . . Mr. MYERS.  
 RACKET . . . . . Mr. HUNTER.  
 CÆSAR (a Negro) . . . . . Mr. RING.

Mrs. DODDLEWOBBLE . . . . . Miss MESTAYER.  
 CLARA . . . . . Miss ANDERSON.  
 BETTY . . . . . Miss J. ORTON.

---

TIME . . . . . The present.  
 COSTUMES . . . . . Those of the day.  
 TIME OF REPRESENTATION . . 40 minutes.



School  
 Nov. 19, 1907  
 Wm. J. Orton

## OFF TO THE WAR.

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### ACT I. — SCENE I.

*An Apartment in Mr. DODDLEWOBBLE'S house. — Table (C.) set for breakfast for two. — Side-doors (R. and L. 2 E., D.C. and R. and L.C.) in flat. — Mr. DODDLEWOBBLE discovered at table (L.C.), reading paper.*

DODD. It's of no use. I can't make head or tail of it. They *can't* be *all* right. It's against reason. It's a diabolical and premeditated outrage on common sense. Oh! it's a terrible thing to be forced to believe that there are beings in human form perambulating this mundane sphere, with an ink-bottle in one hand and a steel pen in the other, doing these things in cold blood. What have I ever done to war-correspondents, that war-correspondents should take this fiendish delight in deceiving me? (*Reads.*) "*The enemy fled before our advancing troops, without firing a gun.*" That's well enough. I've not the slightest objection to any number of enemies flying any number of times before any quantity of guns are fired; not a bit of it. If that's their peculiar way of enjoying themselves, let them enjoy themselves in their peculiar way, in Heaven's name. No! it's not that: it's this. (*Reads.*) "*Our troops fled before the advancing enemy, without firing a gun.*" ~~Den~~-it! it can't be both, you know. It's perfectly distracting. (*Reads.*) "*Jeff. Davis is dead.*" "*Jeff. Davis alive and well.*" "*Jeff. Davis positively dead.*" "*Jeff. Davis seen alive.*" O Lord! O Lord! I shall go crazy. (*Reads.*) "*General Banks is advancing.*" "*Gen. Banks is retreating.*" "*Gen. Banks moves forward.*" "*Gen. Banks has moved backward.*" "*Gen. Banks will not advance.*" "*Gen. Banks has advanced.*" "*Gen. Banks was killed in a skirmish last Monday.*" "*Gen. Banks dined with the com-*

*mander-in-chief on Tuesday.* "Gen. Banks's body will be sent home on Wednesday." "Gen. Banks made a reconnaissance of the enemy's lines on Thursday." O blazes! (*Throwing down paper, and rising angrily.*) I can't go it: it's too much. The demons of the pen and inkbottle have overcome me. They have unhinged my reason. If I should die to-day, and live till to-morrow to be dissected, my heart would show, in letters of fire: "*Our war-correspondent.*" The coroner's verdict would be: "*Died of a surfeit of our war-correspondent.*" And I think they would considerately and charitably add: "*We further think the deceased was of unsound mind, as he is known, on the authority of several reliable witnesses, to have been in the habit of reading the daily papers.*" Oh, dear! oh, dear! my poor head!

*Enter CÆSAR (door 2 E.R.).*

CÆSAR. Ready for you breakfast yet, sah?

DODD. Ready for my breakfast yet, sah? No! I shall never be ready for my breakfast again, you black scoundrel!

CÆSAR. Don't call names, massa; don't call names. Niggers is riz. Niggers is somebodies now. Dey musn't be called names. You hab heard ob de impending crisis, — eh, massa?

DODD. Impending crisis! Yes: I've heard of nothing else these thirty years.

CÆSAR. Well, den, it am impended. Niggers is de crisis. Yes, dey is. I'se one ob de criseses. Yah, yah! (*Laughs.*) Niggers is de war and de crisis bofe. Lor, massa, dis heah war ain't about any ob yar common white folks and your rights. No: it ain't a-goin' to do you any good. It's about de niggers. Niggers is de war, massa.

DODD. How dare you stand there, and talk in that way?

CÆSAR. (*Grinning.*) Kase niggers is de war.

DODD. Get out! Don't talk to me! How dare you talk politics with me? Who the deuce are you, that you dare, eh? —

CÆSAR. Who is I? Golly! don't you know? (*Drawing himself up, and speaking with mock dignity.*) I is one ob de contrebans.

DODD. (*Aghast.*) The what?



CÆSAR. De contrabans. I don't know what dat is ; but I is one.

DODD. Get out, you rascal! Bring in breakfast.

CÆSAR. I thought, massa, you wasn't goin' to eat any mo'.

DODD. Neither am I: only I'm hungry now. Get out! Bring up breakfast ; and, hark you, if you ever bring me a newspaper again, I'll break every bone in your body.

CÆSAR. Guess not, massa. I is a man and a brudder. We ain't 'mong de seceshers, you know. Yah, yah!

(Exit, door, 2 E.R.)

DODD. The insolent rascal! That is the result of getting married, and letting one's wife have her own way. O Daniel Doddlewobble! why did you ever resign your overwhelming charms to the tender mercies of a strong-minded wife? Mrs. Dobblewobble — so strong is her antipathy to every thing Southern, and so sympathetic is she for the runaway slaves, that she has filled my house with niggers. In the garret, in the kitchen, in the parlor and the cellar, — go where I will, — I stumble over a nigger. My friends ask why I don't kick against it. I reply, by advising them to get married.

*Enter Mrs. DODDLEWOBBLE (door 2 E.R.).*

MRS. D. Ah! good-morning, my love! At your papers, I see. What is the news?

DODD. All sorts of news, my dear. You pay your money, and you take your choice. What'll you have, — a victory or a defeat? You can have news in all styles, dished up to suit the most fastidious tastes. There's the "Morning Blower," only one cent. Total annihilation of the Federal army by a hose-pipe. If that don't please you, turn to another column, and you have the complete destruction of the Secession army by a proclamation from Gen. Patterson, or a leading article from the "New-York Tribune." (*Getting excited.*) On to Richmond! On to New Orleans! Huzza! On to anywhere and anybody! All for one cent!

MRS. D. Lor, Doddlewobble! How can you act so?

DODD. Curse it, Mrs. Doddlewobble, it's a perfect sacrifice at the price. Bah! I don't believe that there's any army, any war, any navy, or any anything but newspaper extras. Yes: there is one thing more to sum up this farrago of nonsense, contradiction, and puerility; that is the war-cor-

respondent of the "London Times." Never did so small a *rustle* make so great a noise. That is the climax. Huzza! (*Wildly.*)

MRS. D. Ah, my dear Doddlewobble! you have no patriotism in your heart: you have no love of military movements in you.

DODD. Mrs. Doddlewobble, don't be absurd. I love the military. I adore the military. I may say, Mrs. Doddlewobble, that I go down on my knees, in a metaphorical way, every day before the shrine of the military. Don't adore the military, Mrs. Doddlewobble? Pshaw! Haven't I been a colonel in my time, ma'am?

MRS. D. Yes, my dear. But you know you resigned just when the troubles began.

DODD. What if I did? Do you question my courage, ma'am?

MRS. D. Oh, no, love! Only the look of the thing, in the eyes of your country.

DODD. Don't be absurd, Mrs. Doddlewobble. The eyes of my country, indeed! My country hasn't got any eyes. Nonsense, Mrs. Doddlewobble! If my country has any gratitude, she will erect a graceful and everlasting monument to me for resigning. Only think of it! How many were eager to go! Should I have stood in the way, when there were so many glorious fellows ready to take my place? No! Besides, how do you know that I shouldn't have been taken ill just before going into action?

MRS. D. Only think of the honor of coming back full of glory!

DODD. Only think of the honor of coming back full of holes!

*Re-enter CÆSAR, with breakfast on tray (2 E.R.).*

CÆSAR. (*Singing.*) "*John Brown's bones hang dangling in the air.*" Dar's breakfast, sah.

DODD. Very well. Get out!

CÆSAR. Yes, sah: I's gwine. Don't tear your clothes!

DODD. Get out, I say!

MRS. D. Lor, Doddy, how can you be so harsh! Isn't he a man and a brother?

DODD. I dare say, he is; but I don't like the relationship. Besides, this is a family quarrel. Get out!

CÆSAR. Yes, massa. Yah, yah! (*Laughs.*) Guess he don't know de dignity ob de contraband. Guess he tinks himself ob de same consequence. Massy me! Poor, deluded white man!  
(*Exit CÆSAR, 2 E.R.*)

MRS. D. (*Pouring out coffee.*) My love, I suppose you have heard that your nephew is off for the wars?

DODD. Yes, my dear: I'm glad of it. I like to see the noble spirit of the young man. He's a hero. I hope he'll never come back again.

MRS. D. Why, Doddlewobble, my dear, how can you be so cruel?

DODD. My love, that nephew is a weak point of mine. I'm sure he'll never come to good. I am in hopes that he will cease to annoy me about my ward, Clara; for I'm determined he shall never marry her.

MRS. D. (*Suspiciously.*) Why not, my love? Why not? I'm sure they are an excellent match. Perhaps you are jealous of your nephew, sir?

DODD. There! Now she's at it with her jealousy again!  
(*Aside.*) No, my love: you are mistaken.

MRS. D. Don't tell me, sir! I see through you. You are tired of me, and look forward to my death as the means of marrying your ward yourself.

DODD. Mrs. Doddlewobble, don't force me to become an unwilling convert to the belief that you are a lunatic. It is barely possible that I may have grave and weighty reasons for objecting to this union. My ward is wealthy in her own right, and my vagabond nephew hasn't a penny he can call his own. He is simply a fortune-hunter; and my duty to her dead father prevents my giving my consent to so rash a union.

MRS. D. I more than suspect, Mr. Doddlewobble, that your attachment to the living daughter is of far more consequence to you than your attachment or duty to her dead father. Don't speak, sir: I won't hear of it! I know how it is. (*Sobbing.*) I've had my eye on you for some time.

DODD. (*Pulling up his shirt-collar indignantly.*) Madam, do I look like a man capable of such deeds? Can you gaze into my mild and benevolent countenance, and tax me with such things, without blushing?

MRS. D. Then why not give your consent?

DODD. No, ma'am! Besides, he is going off to the war. Suppose he should get killed: a pretty thing it would be for

the family name! Do you think that the sublime name of Doddlewobble — a name that has come down to me pure and untarnished from a line of illustrious soap-boilers — is to be polluted by me? No, ma'am! I can bear even your suspicions to keep the Doddlewobblean name intact.

MRS. D. Oh! it's all very well to talk such nonsense, sir; but the girl is fretting her very heart out about him.

DODD. Don't talk rubbish, my dear. It's a physical impossibility for her to do any such thing. Do you mean to say that you could fret your very heart out about me?

MRS. D. No! indeed I do not.

DODD. (*Discomposed.*) I didn't mean that. But let us drop the subject.

MRS. D. No, sir! (*Rising.*) I will never drop the subject! I see plainly how it is: you don't love me.

DODD. Listen to your Doddy.

MRS. D. No, sir! I don't wish to hear your hateful voice again.

DODD. What? Don't desert your Wobby, love.

MRS. D. Rubbish! I'll go home to my pa. (*Sobbing.*)

DODD. Bother her pa! (*Aside.*) My dear —

MRS. D. (*Shaking him.*) You're a mean, pitiful, sneaking hypocrite; and I'll sue for a divorce this very day!

DODD. My love? No, you won't, darling!

MRS. D. You're right. I'll live with you to torment your life out. I know you'd be delighted to get rid of me. I'm getting hysterical. Ah, ah! I feel I am! Ah! (*Sits in chair, and screams.*)

DODD. Infernally pleasant, this! Here, Betty, Betty! (*Rings bell.*) A pretty life to lead! Betty, Betty! (*Shouting, while his wife screams.*)

*Enter BETTY (door 2 E.R.).*

BETTY. Well, sir: do you want me?

DODD. Yes. Take your mistress to her room, and cram a flat-iron or a pillow down her throat!

MRS. D. (*Starting up.*) Ugh, you brute! Betty, your master is killing me by his brutality.

BETTY. Lor, ma'am: why don't you lick him? *Do for her with a chair*

DODD. Killing you! No such luck. If wishing would do it —

MRS. D. I should have been dead long ago, I suppose.

DODD. Ahem!

BETTY. Come along, ma'am. Don't mind him: he's nobody. (*Leading her away, R.*)

MRS. D. O Betty!

BETTY. (*At door, 2 E.L.*) Ugh, you brute! (*Making a face at DODDLEWOBBLE.*) Come along, ma'am.

MRS. D. (*Rushing at DODDLEWOBBLE, and shaking him violently.*) O Betty! I'm so weak!

BETTY. Of course you are, ma'am; of course you are.

(*Exit BETTY and Mrs. DODDLEWOBBLE, 2 E.R.*)

DODD. Weak! Poor thing! She nearly shook my teeth down my throat. After that, I may enlist with safety. Insulted by my own servants too! If this sort of thing goes on, I shall begin to have a slight suspicion that I am henpecked; yes, henpecked, — I, the late colonel of a regiment of State militia! Doddlewobble, this will never do. You must assert your rights, my boy, and avenge your wrongs.

*Enter WALTER (2 E.L.).*

WALTER. Ah! my dear uncle.

DODD. Well, what the devil do you want?

WALTER. I have enlisted, uncle; and I have come to say good-by.

DODD. Not the slightest necessity to do so. However, say it, and go about your business.

WALTER. But that isn't all, uncle.

DODD. Oh! that isn't all, isn't it? Well, what more is there?

WALTER. You know, sir, how fondly and devotedly I love your ward, Clara.

DODD. Yes, sir: I do. And you know how fondly and devotedly I have refused to listen to your addresses for her hand.

WALTER. Alas! I know it, sir; but, notwithstanding, I have come to make one last attempt on your generosity.

DODD. No, sir! You mean you have come to make one last attempt on her fortune. I won't listen to it! Young man, forbear!

WALTER. I may not come back alive.

DODD. Don't be absurd. You won't come back dead, will you?

WALTER. I mean, I may never see her again.

DODD. Very likely. Good day, sir: I'm busy.

WALTER. O sir! you will not be so cruel as to refuse me a last interview with her.

DODD. No: I don't refuse you a *last* interview with her.

WALTER. Ah, generous man!

DODD. But I refuse you a first interview with her.

WALTER. He is inexorable: I must have recourse to stratagem. (*Aside.*) Sir! (*Mysteriously.*) Hush!

DODD. What do you mean?

WALTER. Hush! Are you sure nobody listens?

DODD. How do I know? What do I care?

WALTER. Hush! It's all right.

DODD. What's all right? (*Confused.*)

WALTER. Hush! I'm a friend: I'm on your side.

DODD. On my side! (*Aside.*) What does he mean? He is a lunatic. Oh! I see how it is. He's been trying to make sense out of the war-reports, and has gone crazy over his vain task. Keep off!

WALTER. They are here. The plot is ripe for development. In a day or so, all will be ours.

DODD. Ours! What do you mean? (*Confused.*)

WALTER. Why, you know: the wish nearest your heart. I have made your plans known to our friends.

DODD. My plans! What the devil does he mean? Will you explain yourself, sir?

WALTER. Well, then, I received your letter, and our friends in the South are grateful to you for your kind suggestions.

DODD. (*Aghast.*) Friends in the South?

WALTER. Yes: the secessionists.

DODD. Secessionists! my friends! Will you, if you don't want me to strangle you on the spot, condescend to explain what all this infernal mystery about secessionists, and my friends in the South, is about?

WALTER. Oh! It's very well carried out by you, uncle; but it won't do.

DODD. But it will do: it must do.

WALTER. We all belong to the same party. I know your sympathies are with the South: so are mine.

DODD. Monster! avaunt!

WALTER. Oh! nonsense, uncle. You shouldn't, between friends, you know. Is this letter yours? (*Opens letter.*)

DODD. Yes: certainly it is.

WALTER. Well, then, do you mean to deny what you have written in it? Listen. (*Reads.*) "*Nephew, I have grave and weighty objections to the union. Your ridiculous letter about sympathy has been received. I emphatically decline to acknowledge the right you claim; and inform you, for the last time, my sympathies are the other way.*" Did you write that?

DODD. Certainly I did.

WALTER. Ah! you admit that. "*Your sympathies are the other way,*" eh? Wait a bit. (*Reads.*) "*The conduct you extol is mean and pitiful in every way; and I find the course you complain of perfectly justifiable.*" Eh? Perfectly justifiable?

DODD. Of course I do.

WALTER. You admit it, then?

DODD. Certainly; and I repeat it. Perfectly justifiable!

WALTER. Very well, sir: I am glad you do. (*Reads.*) "*You speak of yielding at length. I say, sir, never! Your loving uncle, D. DODDLEWOBBLE.*" Grave and weighty objections to the Union — sympathies the other way — perfectly justifiable — and never yield. Do you mean to say now that you don't know what I mean?

DODD. Certainly not, sir. (*Loudly.*) I meant —

WALTER. Hush! Speak lower. You don't know who may overhear us.

DODD. What do I care who overhears us? That is my reply to your last letter, asking for my ward. You asked me to give my consent to your union: I said I had grave and weighty objections to it. You wrote, that I should sympathize with your feelings: I wrote, as you have just read, my sympathies were the other way. You said that my conduct was not justifiable: I wrote you, that I considered it perfectly justifiable. You wrote to me, saying I would eventually yield; and I said I never would. Where is the necessity for all this mystery?

WALTER. Nonsense! This is all very well; but it won't do. You meant, you had objections to the Union of the States: you meant to say that the conduct of the South was perfectly justifiable.

DODD. (*Aghast.*) Eh?

WALTER. That your sympathies were not with the North, but the other way.

DODD. (*Overwhelmed.*) Murder!

WALTER. And that you hoped they would never yield.

DODD. Why, you barefaced rascal! you know better.

WALTER. Nonsense, uncle! It was on the strength of that belief, that I proposed you as President of a noted Secession club just started in this city; and I joy to tell you that you are elected.

DODD. Me? What horrible mystery is this? (*Falls in chair.*)

WALTER. (*Aside.*) Poor uncle! This has completely upset him. Ha, ha! (*Laughs.*) Well, uncle, what do you say?

DODD. What do I say? Why, I say that it is one of the most diabolical plots against a man's peace of mind that I ever heard of.

WALTER. First-rate: you carry it off well. You'll be an invaluable president. It's all right.

DODD. No, sir: it's all wrong, — infernally wrong, diabolically wrong, d—d wrong!

WALTER. I wouldn't advise you to say it in the hearing of any member of the club: your life would not be worth a minute's purchase.

DODD. Horrible!

WALTER. There will be a meeting here this evening.

DODD. What! here? Monster!

WALTER. Yes, here! Uncle, prepare for it. Get all spies out of the way: we look to you for that.

DODD. We? Look to me for that?

WALTER. Yes. I must go now. Be careful what you say: you can't be too prudent, you know. If any thing should leak out, you know, you will be denounced to the authorities as the ringleader; and you would at once become the victim of popular violence. All right. Good-by, noble President!

BETTY. (*Peeping through door, 2 E.R.*) What a old rascal master is!  
(*Exit, R. 2 E.*)

DODD. But, Walter —

WALTER. All right. Good-by! Remember to-night. (*Aside.*) Poor uncle! he is puzzled enough. Well he may be.  
(*Exit, door, 2 E.L.*)

DODD. Am I awake? President of a Secession club! Me, — a man above reproach, above suspicion! Me, — a stanch and loyal Northerner! The very thought makes me feel as if I had three inches of bowie-knife under my fourth



rib. A meeting here to-night! If I should be suspected of receiving a secessionist here — oh! I already feel the soothing effects of hot tar, and adhesive feathers in the most generous profusion. This is worse than our war-correspondent. I am resolved. Here, Cæsar! (*Takes teapot by the spout, and begins to ring it as though it were a bell.*) I'll run away! Cæsar!

*Enter BETTY (door 2 E.R.).*

BETTY. O sir! (*Reproachfully.*) I'd never ha' thought it. I knew you could abuse your poor weak and trusting wife; but I little thought you could ha' done it.

DODD. Another mystery! Am I going crazy? What do you mean, you insolent menial?

BETTY. Oh, yes! you can be sassy to me. What could I expect of a man who ill-treats his wife?

DODD. Sassy! and to her! Oh, this is intolerable! Diminutive and impertinent being, insignificant and most talkative of kitchen wenches, pack up the extremely small amount of wearing apparel that you are possessed of, and depart from the mansion of Doddlewooble! Wander forth from the palatial dwelling that refuses longer to harbor you!

BETTY. Oh, yes! I dare say. So you want to get rid of me, that you may abuse your wife without witnesses. I wish you had me to deal with, instead of her: I guess I'd make your hair curl the wrong way. Oh! ~~just hold your jaw till I get through with you.~~ If it warn't for your poor and abused wife, I wouldn't stay under your roof a single minute.

DODD. I believe you: you won't stay any longer, wife or no wife; so pack up.

BETTY. No, I shan't: you ain't master here, your poor, miserable, henpecked, old noodle! I shan't pack up till I get orders from missus.

DODD. Female! depart, ere I annihilate you with an explosion of my pent-up dignity.

BETTY. That's pretty language for a gentleman, isn't it? Ugh! what could one expect?

DODD. If you don't get out, I'll have you taken out, neck and heels.

BETTY. Oh! you will, will you, Mr. President?

DODD. (*Aghast.*) Eh?

BETTY. Mr. Secesher! you will, will you? I heard it all: I know all about your doings. You'll have a good time of it

when you're found out. What a gay old toot you'll be put through!

DODD. Put through! O Lord!

BETTY. So you're a Southerner.

DODD. No, Betty: on my soul, no! Silence! Would you ruin me? (*Gives her a coin.*)

BETTY. (*Contemptuously.*) A half-dollar! Poh! Do you think I am to be bribed to silence?

DODD. Mercenary but powerful being, there's another.

BETTY. (*Indignantly.*) Two half-dollars! When his neck is in danger, too!

DODD. Fatal, vindictive, and fearfully exorbitant being of the gentler sex, here is another.

BETTY. Three half-dollars! I scorns the bribe! (*Puts money in her pocket.*) I heard all about it, and missus shall know all about it too.

DODD. Insatiable and fiendish tormenter, here is a five-dollar bill. (*Gives money.*) Will that satisfy you? Oh that an innocent man, and a true patriot, should be thus bled by a corrupt and heartless domestic! Will that do?

BETTY. For the present; but I must have the privilege of going out when I will.

DODD. You can go out, and never come back again, if you want.

BETTY. I must have company whenever I choose; and must have the privilege of seeing them in the parlor when they come, and of asking them to tea if I wish.

DODD. All shall be yours, if you'll only let me make the tea. Wouldn't you like me to get up, and light the fires, and take in the milk, and do the washing; making a pleasant wind-up by scouring the kitchen-floor?

BETTY. Well, since you press it so kindly, I give my consent, and don't mind if you do.

DODD. Serpent on my family hearthstone — (*Violently.*)

BETTY. Very well, sir: if you take it in that way, all I have to do is to perform my duty to my country, and denounce you as a traitor.

DODD. Oh, no, Betty! in the day of your power, be merciful.

BETTY. Don't think I can, sir. Consider my *dooty* to my country.

DODD. Consider your *dooty* to the cause of humanity, Betty. I am innocent of this foul charge: I will swear it on

my knees. See me swear it on my knees! (*Kneels.*) There, Betty!

*Enter Mrs. DODDLEWOBBLE (door 2 E.R.).*

MRS. D. What do I see? On his knees to the housemaid! The monster!

DODD. My wife! Murder! Here's luck!

(*Exit, running, 1 E.R.*)

MRS. D. The heartless monster! I'll give it to him!

(*Exit, running after Mr. DODDLEWOBBLE, 1 E.R.*)

BETTY. There goes a happy couple. Only think that master is such a unnatural villain as to go and conspire against his country in that horrid manner with Mr. Walter! Who'd a thought it? If it wasn't for my mercy and consideration, and for my disinterested silence, what would become of him?

*Enter WALTER, cautiously (2 E.L.).*

WALTER. Betty!

BETTY. Ah! (*Retreating.*) Keep back, you unnatural revolutionizer! Keep back, or I'll scream!

WALTER. What, Betty! don't you know me?

BETTY. Yes: I know you. I overheard your conversation with master a little while ago.

WALTER. Ah, then! good! That does away with the necessity of my telling you all about it. It was only part of a little scheme I have in view, with the object of compelling him to consent to the union of myself and Clara.

BETTY. Honor bright?

WALTER. Honor bright, of course.

BETTY. Lord bless me! How well you did it!

WALTER. Now, I want you to assist me; and, if I succeed, I'll give you twenty dollars.

BETTY. No! Will you, though? Very well, Mr. Walter: you've only to command, and I'll obey.

WALTER. I want you to give Clara this letter from me.

BETTY. It's all fair, I hope.

WALTER. Have no fear, Betty: I'd scorn to do any thing mean or contemptible, even to gain the hand of her I love better than life itself. You need have no fear.

BETTY. (*Taking letter.*) I believe you, sir: she shall

have the letter. Bless me, sir! the poor thing frets her very life away along of you. She doesn't smile from morning till night; and, since she has heard that you are going off to the wars, she has scarcely eaten a meal.

WALTER. I am sorry for that, Betty; but I cannot be a laggard, nor make an excuse for not fighting for my country in such a glorious cause as the present, even to gain the happiness of her I love. I am certain, Betty, that she would scorn me, if I delayed to go when called upon; at least, if she is the woman of spirit I take her to be. Some one is coming: I cannot delay longer. Whatever you see, remember that it is part of my plot; and mind you assist me. Don't forget the letter. (*Exit, hastily, door 2 E.L.*)

BETTY. Now, there's a nice young man, if you like. Lor, how different from master! I shouldn't mind marrying him myself.

*Enter CÆSAR (door 2 E.R.).*

CÆSAR. Ah! you is *dere*, Miss Betty, is you?

BETTY. Can't you see I am?

CÆSAR. You am de bery party I want to see. I has been looking for you.

BETTY. Well, what's the matter?

CÆSAR. I want you to take a good look at me. (*Turns around.*) Does you observe my elegance and divine perporshuns? Well, den, I suppose you am perfectly aware ob my consequence at de present moment?

BETTY. Your consequence! What do you mean?

CÆSAR. (*Fervently clasping his hands.*) Miss Betty, you sees afore you one ob de oppressed race ob Africa. You sees afore you one ob dat glorious tribe what has produced de present extraordinary state ob affairs. Need I allude to de contrabans? You perceive my meaning. Well, den, in de spirit ob prophecy, I foresee dat de day is not far distant, when de darkey will be de most consequential man in dis yeah country, especially in de hub ob de uniwarise. It am not unlikely dat I may be de President ob dese United States ewentually. Yah, yah!

BETTY. But you forget, Cæsar, they are not united at present.

CÆSAR. No, Miss Betty; but dey're goin' to be: you may bet high on dat. Well, den, in de ewent transpiring, and de possibility ob my being elected president, or, at de least, in

Governor Andrews' place, I offer you, in advance, de honor ob my hand and my heart. (*Taking a grotesque position.*)

BETTY. Get out, you black stick of sealing-wax! Do you think I'd marry a nigger?

CÆSAR. Why not? Dat's only 'malgamation, after all. Guess you be glad enuf one ob dese days, when de nigger won't be so willin'. You'd better tink twice afore you rejects it.

BETTY. Nonsense! don't annoy me. If you talk to me about it again, I'll pull your wool!

CÆSAR. Wery well. You doesn't understand de dignity and de condescension of this heah contraban. (*Calmly, and with mock dignity.*) Wery well; I takes it all back again: only I tells you aforehand, you'll be sorry when I'se governor, and de late governor is awaitin' in de lobby to know my commands. Good-day, miss! I takes it all back. (*Going, 2 E.R.*) I'll gib you one more chance. Will you?

BETTY. Come here, Cæsar. (*Advancing to him.*)

CÆSAR. (*Grinning.*) Well, Miss Betty, does you repent? (*Advancing.*)

BETTY. Yes, Cæsar. Come closer. (*When CÆSAR is within arm's length, BETTY boxes his ears and scratches him.*) There, there, there!

(*Exit CÆSAR, 2 E.R., pursued by BETTY.*)

*Re-enter Mr. DODDLEWOBBLE (1 E.R.).*

DODD. Well, this has been a blessed day for me. This is a delightful sort of life for a patriot and a Doddlewobble to lead. But I'm determined not to stand it: I'll pack up, and get out of the way at once. (*Going, L.*)

*Enter FUDGIT (2 E.L.).*

FUDGIT. (*Looking around mysteriously.*) Humph!

DODD. Halloo! another adventure! Who can this be?

FUDGIT. Hush!

DODD. It's cursedly annoying, that a man is to be so perpetually hushed at in his own house. Well, sir, what's your business?

FUDGIT. Hush! It's all right. You're Doddlewobble.

DODD. Well, what of it?

FUDGIT. I'm here! (*Mysteriously.*)

DODD. Mysterious and incomprehensible mortal, do you think I'm blind? I see you're here. The fact that you're here is exceedingly gratifying, or no doubt ought to be; only I can't see it, for the soul of me, in the same light. Your intelligence is very remarkable. You first tell me I'm Doddlewobble; and, next, that you're here. The next gratifying piece of information to me will be, that you're pitched out of that window, if you don't tell me why you're here.

FUDGIT. Hush! You know.

DODD. Do I?

FUDGIT. I'm Fudgit.

DODD. Are you?

FUDGIT. Sworn to secrecy!

DODD. Oh! I'm glad of that. What secrecy?

FUDGIT. It! — it!

DODD. It — it! What the devil is <sup>it</sup> it?

FUDGIT. Hush! some one comes! Conceal me! By our sacred bond of brotherhood, I command you!

DODD. (*Puzzled.*) Brotherhood! ~~It!~~ This must be a lunatic of the first water. What do you mean?

FUDGIT. Secesh! noble president. Ah! they are here.

(*Exit FUDGIT, hastily, door L.C.*)

DODD. Secesh! President! *It!* Oh! I see it all. It is one of the deluded members of that club of which I am the unconscious and innocent president. I am lost! (*Sinks in a chair, overwhelmed.*) If he is found here, and his purpose known, tar and feathers will be an angelic mercy to what I may expect. I'll not wait to pack up: I'll off at once. (*Going, L.*)

*Enter BLIMBER (door 2 E.L.).*

BLIMBER. Hush!

DODD. Another one! O Lord! He looks a bloodthirsty and sanguinary monster. (*Aside.*)

BLIMBER. You don't know me. (*Mysteriously.*)

DODD. Wonderfully developed being, you are right: I do not.

BLIMBER. It's all right.

DODD. Is it?

BLIMBER. I'm a detective.

DODD. O Lord! (*Tumbles faintly against him.*)

BLIMBER. Why, what's the matter?

DODD. Nothing. He isn't here: I assure you, he isn't.

BLIMBER. He! who? Ah!

DODD. Nobody. I nearly let it out. (*Aside.*)

BLIMBER. Oh! Well, then, you must know that I have received information — ah! Somebody comes! Don't betray my secret, as you value your safety.

(*Exit* BLIMBER, *door R.C.*)

DODD. No, I won't. Oh, dear me! There's a blessing for a strictly conscientious man! Talk about a man's house being his castle! It's all rubbish: it's his prison. Here have I got an unwelcome, bloodthirsty Southerner in one room, and a detective officer in the other, equally unwelcome. If I betray the Southerner, I shall be taken up as his accomplice; and, if I don't, I shall be arrested just the same, when he is found here concealed. O Lord! President of a club, too! Bowie-knives — tar — feathers! Bless me! I'm a lost man! I'll make one more effort to escape. (*Going, L.*)

*Enter* RACKET (*door 2 E.L.*).

RACKET. Hush! (*Mysteriously.*)

DODD. Oh! it's of no use. I resign myself to my fate. I know you. (*Wildly.*) Hush! it's all right! I'm here! Don't mind me! Secesh! It! All right! Some one is coming. (*Starting for door 2 E.L.*)

RACKET. Hold! (*Taking DODDLEWOBBLE to extreme L.*) Are we alone?

DODD. ~~D~~n it! can't you see we are?

BLIMBER. (*Putting his head out of door R.*) Hush! (*Exit.*)

RACKET. What's that?

DODD. There's the detective! I'm lost! Doddlewobble, prepare yourself for tar.

RACKET. We are brothers. (*Taking him to extreme R.*)

FUDGIT. Hush! (*From door L.C.; then exit.*)

RACKET. Again that sound!

DODD. Oh, it's nothing! Merely the cockroaches coughing. It's that confoundedly bloodthirsty rascal! What shall I do? O Doddlewobble! prepare yourself for the accompanying feathers. (*Aside.*) I'll brazen it out. Ha, ha! (*Laughs.*) Yes: a devilish good story! Laugh, you scoundrel! (*Choking* RACKET.)

RACKET. Ha, ha! (*Laughs.*)

DODD. Yes, very good. Ha, ha! So strange! Laugh!

RACKET. Hush! Take this, and prepare. (*Places large bowie-knife in DODDLEWOBBLE'S hand.*) This evening, all will be settled: you have been chosen as the boldest of our clan. Strike home! strike deep! Hush! we must be cautious. (*Going to door R.C.*)

DODD. No, not there! Here! (*Takes him by throat, and kicks him into cupboard, L.C., with FUDGIT.*) What is to prevent my committing a violent and justifiable homicide on the persons of these miscreants? Oh, if I were not afraid of the consequences! This has got to end somewhere: it can't go on for ever. I begin to feel desperate. Ha, ha! It's rather funny: it's a devilish good joke. It's rather gratifying than otherwise to have one's life in perpetual danger. I have rather grown to like the peculiarly gratifying sensation of having cold perspiration run down the middle of my back: it's quite of a piece with my becoming, in the course of half an hour, a sanguinary president of a sanguinary club, with the most sanguinary of sanguinary bowie-knives in my sanguinary hand. Ha, ha! Talk of war-correspondents! they're blessings, compared to this! I can't stand it much longer: I feel I can't. It's worse than being a popular candidate for the presidency. I'd much rather be in the Secretary of the Navy's shoes, as uncomfortable as they are. I never was overburdened with brains; but I know I've got some, by the peculiarly burning sensation I feel in that precise spot at the present moment. I'm going! Another blow, and I'm up in the air! I'll become a blissful cherrybum!

*Enter CÆSAR (2 E.R.).*

CÆSAR. (*Mysteriously.*) Hush! secesh!

DODD. You villain, you are doomed! (*Kicks him out, 2 E.R., after shaking him.*)

*Enter BETTY (door 2 E.R.).*

BETTY. Hush! they're here, sir! Mum!

DODD. They are, are they? Send them away again.

BETTY. They won't go, sir: they've all got knives and pistols in their coat-bosoms.

DODD. I wish they had them in their stomachs.



*Enter WALTER (door 2 E.L.).*

WALTER. They are all here, sir.

DODD. Monster! (*Catching him by the collar, and shaking him.*) I'll throttle you! Get me out of this confounded scrape you have got me into, or I'll assassinate you on the spot!

WALTER. But, sir, consider. The club —

DODD. I can't consider any thing. (*Shakes him.*)

BETTY. Master, let him go! I won't stand by, and see you abuse him. (*Beats DODDLEWOBBLE.*)

*Enter Mrs. DODDLEWOBBLE (1 E.R.).*

MRS. D. What do I see? An assault on my husband! (*She pummels WALTER, and then pulls off BETTY'S cap. BETTY leaves DODDLEWOBBLE, and fights with Mrs. DODDLEWOBBLE.*)

DODD. Monster, recant!

WALTER. (*Striking DODDLEWOBBLE in the stomach.*) Let go!

DODD. (*Gasping.*) Monster! Release me from this horrid quandary! (*Gasping.*) They're there! (*Points to door-flat.*)

WALTER. Help me to part the women! (*They part BETTY and Mrs. DODDLEWOBBLE.*)

BETTY. (*Squaring at Mrs. DODDLEWOBBLE.*) Ah! let her come on!

MRS. D. (*In chair, R., screaming.*) Ah!

BETTY. (*In chair, L., screaming.*) Ah!

DODD. (*Distracted.*) This is delightful!

WALTER. I tell you what I'll do. Give me your ward, and I'll send these men about their business.

DODD. You will? Take her, and be hanged!

WALTER. (*Going to door R.*) Come along, Blimber. It's all right: I don't want you any more. The old fellow has yielded. (*Aside.*)

BLIMBER. All right. (*Going, R.*) I'll see you at the camp.

DODD. He has suborned the detective! Can such things be?

BLIMBER. Hush! (*Mysteriously, to DODD.*)

DODD. Get out! (*Retreating.*)

WALTER. I'll see you again, old fellow. Get out now!  
(*Aside to BLIMBER.*) (*Exit BLIMBER, 2 E.R.*)

DODD. Now for the others.

WALTER. I have your word that I may wed your ward?

MRS. D. Yes, that you have! I'll answer for him, Walter.

DODD. Mrs. DODDLEWOBBLE — (*Firmly.*)

MRS. D. (*Sitting in chair, and screaming again.*) Ah!

DODD. Yes! you have my word. (*Mrs. DODDLEWOBBLE silent.*)

WALTER. (*Going to door L.C.*) Come along, boys. Follow Blimber, and meet me at the camp. It's all right.

FUDGIT. } All right. Hush! (*Mysteriously, to DODDLE-*  
RACKET. } WOBBLE.)

DODD. (*Starting.*) The miscreants!

(*Exit RACKET and FUDGIT, door 2 E.R.*)

WALTER. Now, sir, I claim the fulfilment of your promise.

DODD. I'll see you —

MRS. D. (*Shrieking again.*) Ah!

BETTY. (*Shrieking again.*) Ah!

DODD. I consent. Go and find her. (*Exit WALTER, door 2 E.L.*) Oh, what a happy release from this day of troubles! It shan't happen again; for I'll off to Europe by the next steamer. As for you, miss (*to BETTY*), get down to your kitchen, and don't let me see your face here again, or I'll tumble you, neck and heels, into the street. (*Takes BETTY by nape of her neck, and leads her off, door 2 E.L.*) Now, Mrs. DODDLEWOBBLE, what am I to understand by your conduct?

MRS. D. O Doddy! forgive me for my silly jealousy: I will never be so silly again.

DODD. Never let it be said that a Doddlewobble was unforgiving. Embrace me, my love!

*Enter WALTER with CLARA (2 E.R.).*

WALTER. (*Kneels with CLARA.*) Your blessing, sir.

DODD. Take it (*aside*), and be d—d!

WALTER. Thank you, sir. In a few days, I must depart with my regiment; and, if I should be fortunate enough to return, you will not find me ungrateful. My only wish was to wed my dear Clara before I went off to the war.

CÆSAR enters (door 2 E.L.), followed by BETTY.

CÆSAR. Here de last extra, sah? (*Gives paper.*)

DODD. Ah! give it me! (*Takes paper.*) Ah! (*Reads.*)  
 What do I see? Another battle! Price and Mulligan!  
 What! have Ned Price and Billy Mulligan been at it  
 again? "One, P.M. — *We are informed, on the best authority,*  
*that the Government has received positive evidence of the death*  
*of Jeff Davis.*" Huzza! What's this? (*Reads.*) "Two  
 o'clock, P.M. *Jeff. Davis was alive and well at last accounts.*"  
 The demons again! (*Sinks in chair, c.*)

MRS. D. WALTER.

CLARA.

DODD.

CÆSAR.

BETTY.

CURTAIN.

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